



**American  
Red Cross**

South Carolina Blood Services Region  
2751 Bull Street  
Columbia, SC 29201

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Community Citizens Encouraged to Become Local Lifesavers**

*Fourth Annual Columbia Lifesavers blood drive scheduled for Feb. 28*

**COLUMBIA, S.C., Feb. 5, 2014**—Mayor Steve Benjamin, the City of Columbia and the American Red Cross South Carolina Blood Services Region Board of Directors are teaming up for the fourth annual Columbia Lifesavers blood drive. The event will take place 7 a.m.-5 p.m. Friday, Feb. 28, at the Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center, 1101 Lincoln St.

The open-to-the-public event is being held to raise community awareness about the importance of blood donation and to collect blood for hospital patients undergoing cancer treatments, lifesaving surgeries, and emergency care related to accidents and trauma.

For more information or to schedule an appointment to donate, please call **1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767)** or visit **redcrossblood.org** and enter sponsor code **famouslyhot**.

All presenting donors will receive a Red Cross T-shirt, a basketball stress reliever, and a buy-one-get-one-free buffet pass from CiCi's Pizza.

**Severe winter weather throughout January across much of the country forced the cancellation of about 770 Red Cross blood drives, resulting in more than 25,000 uncollected blood and platelet donations. In the South Carolina Region, severe winter weather forced the cancellation of 35 Red Cross blood drive operations, resulting in more than 1,400 units of uncollected blood. There is an urgent need for blood types O positive, O negative, A negative and B negative.**

"We are grateful for the opportunity to partner with Mayor Benjamin, the City of Columbia and the South Carolina Region Board of Directors to raise awareness in the Columbia community about the need for blood," stated Ryan Corcoran, South Carolina Region Community Chief Executive Officer. "The Columbia Lifesavers blood drive is a wonderful opportunity for us to work together to save lives. Every pint of blood collected is a chance to help three patients in need."

More than 900 pints of blood have been collected at the past three Columbia Lifesavers blood drives, potentially helping more than 1,800 patients. Results from the past three events are as follows: 2013— 375 pints, 2012—320 pints, and 2011—210 pints.

The Red Cross South Carolina Blood Services Region provides lifesaving blood to patients in 54 hospitals. Approximately 500 people need to give blood or platelets each week day to meet hospital demands. Blood can be donated every 56 days. Platelets can be given every seven days, up to 24 times a year.

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**How to Donate Blood**

*Simply call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767) or visit [redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org) to make an appointment or for more information. All blood types are needed to ensure a reliable supply for patients. A blood donor card or driver's license, or two other forms of identification are required at check-in. Individuals who are 17 years of age (16 with parental permission in some states), weigh at least 110 pounds and are generally in good health may be eligible to donate blood. High school students and other donors 18 years of age and younger also have to meet certain height and weight requirements.*

**About the American Red Cross:**

*The American Red Cross shelters, feeds and provides emotional support to victims of disasters; supplies about 40 percent of the nation's blood; teaches skills that save lives; provides international humanitarian aid; and supports military members and their families. The Red Cross is a not-for-profit organization that depends on volunteers and the generosity of the American public to perform its mission. For more information, please visit [redcross.org](http://redcross.org) or join our blog at <http://blog.redcross.org>.*